something dramatic by blushinghanlon

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when steve harrington shows up on a recently-single nancy wheeler's roof seeking solace, all of the feelings for each other that had been bottled up explode.

something dramatic

nancy wheeler didn't know what was going to happen that hot, humid summer night, but she certainly didn't expect it to be steve harrington on her roof like it was 1983 again.

the recently single brunette had been hanging out alone in her bedroom that night, letting the radio play as she absentmindedly flipped through her novel for summer reading. it had been a good day, filled with swimming. it was the type that left you happy, the type that gave you the perfect, sunkissed, afternoon nap that people crave. she was content, and she hadn't been able to say that in a long time, what with everything that had been going on. it seemed to finally settle down once more, and nancy relished it.

the cooler nights had been rolling around more frequently, and that night was one of them. arising from her bed, she straightened her old tee shirt she'd stolen from steve when they'd been together and opened up her window. the shirt had too many emotions attached to it, and she was trying to erase those memories so she could just enjoy the worn comfort of it. the forest green shirt still smelled like that perfect mix of her drawers and him, and nancy was trying her best to ignore it as she breathed in the clean air and stared up at the stars.

that's when she heard the rustling.

shit, she thought. *is it a raccoon? are there even raccoons around here?* she didn't know what to do. *should i investigate?* after considering it for a moment, she opened the window wider, used the scrunchie on her wrist to tie up her hair in a ponytail, and climbed out barefoot. the shingles of her house felt rough underneath her feet, but they'd

been building up calluses all summer, so it didn't impact her too much. nancy got her footing secure, balanced herself, and then looked around.

oh, my god. is that—

"hey, nance." the voice was so familiar, so warm and yet unsettling. steve harrington was sitting on her roof just like he used to, curled up into his hoodie that he barely wore. he offered her a soft smile warily. the floppy-haired boy knew he was on thin ice.

"god, steve, what are you doing here?" she snapped. "you can't just hang out on my roof! have you done this before?" nancy crawled over to him to try to figure out what the hell was going on and so she wouldn't shout and alert her parents.

"no, no! this is the first time," he assured her, getting out of his more comfortable position and facing her.

"but why are you *here* ?" she asked, gesturing to the house they sat upon. "i mean, is there—"

"my dad was yelling again. not *about* mom, just kind of *at* her. it was a lot. she was yelling back. it's always like that when they get back from one of those long trips, you know?" nancy did know. she knew exactly how they'd walked up to his house just to see his parents getting home and arguing furiously. she rarely saw steve so vulnerable, and she knew how it impacted him. whether she could relate or not, she got it. "i didn't know where to go, because i didn't want to stay there, so i just…" steve trailed off.

“oh,” nancy sighed. “i’m sorry.” she shook her head and pursed her lips as she studied his face carefully. he looked just the same and yet eons older than he did when they were together.

suddenly, she was incredibly hyper-aware of everything in that moment. the smell of his worn-out shirt that she’d been nestled in merely moments earlier, the moonlight overhead that aided the lamp light from her room at lighting up the rooftop, “everybody wants to rule the world” floating out her window, and the way he looked at her. it was if they were the only two people on earth- not necessarily romantic, just stupefying in the way she always felt when she was alone around steve. it made her feel important.

“i was getting ready to go,” steve said. “i mean, i’m probably going to crash at dustin’s. he’s been practically begging me to spend the night over there, and his mom seems to love the idea of me being an older, male figure or whatever.” he laughed almost sadly. “it was good to see you again, nance. you look good.”

he waved curtly and began to climb when nancy exclaimed, “wait!”

steve’s head snapped back to look at her again, clearly taken aback. he wasn’t used to her wanting much to do with him. “yeah?”

nancy began to overthink as she always did. what if the whole thing was a bad idea? *screw it. you have his attention already.* “you’re already here,” nancy pointed out. “um, you can stay here. if you want,” she rushed. “if you’re not comfortable with it, you can go to dustin’s, i mean-”

steve laughed, and it made her have butterflies all over again. she felt how she did when they'd just gotten together, when he'd leave her locker notes, just for a split second. *oh, no. not again.* "are you sure? you don't sound really sure."

a pause, and then nancy replied, "i'm sure. come on, and be quiet." she tried to hide the same kiddish smile she always got. she'd missed steve, truth be told, whether in friendship or in romance. nancy felt as if her heart was betraying her somehow. she felt like she'd read both his mind and the past when she knew exactly what he said.

"come on, you know i'm a ninja," he joked, calling back to the very first time he'd climbed through that window. nancy laughed quietly as they made their way towards and into her room. it felt all-too familiar. she wasn't sure if she hated it or not.

"god, it hasn't changed a bit in here," steve commented during his quick scan of the room.

nancy rolled her eyes. "i got a new stereo, so can it." she glanced at the clock- 12:43 am- before walking over to her closet. "i've got an extra pillow in here, and a ton of blankets." she grabbed a pillow with a baby pink case and tossed it to him by the extra cloth on it. "you can come grab what all you want." she stepped back and watched him gather what he needed.

"thanks."

nancy went back to her bed and flopped onto it. how was she so comfortable around a person she could barely speak around in the past? it was all a blur to her. steve just pulled something out of her that was making her act that way, she decided, and was sticking to that theory.

“what were you doing before i came in here and screwed up your night?” steve asked only half teasingly as he started to make a makeshift pallet on the floor.

“don’t say that,” she chided.

“say what?” steve asked. he looked up, staring deep into her eyes. it felt like he was probing her.

“don’t act like you’re messing up some plans of mine. you needed a place to stay.”

“those are two barely related sentences,” steve pointedly said. “i know you. you’re not my biggest fan right now. i know i help take care of your brother and stuff, but i’m still… inconveniencing you.” he shook his head. “i’m grateful for this, trust me. i like being the homeless version of a one-night stand as much as the next guy.”

nancy got up off her bed and walked over to steve. “you’re not a burden. a few months ago, would i have thought that? maybe so.” her brutal words shocked even her, but it was the truth. “now, though? i know i was being bitchy. we both screwed up together, and i realized that. i’m not holding something over your head anymore, steve. you’re different, and so am i.” she put her hand on his

shoulder.

“don’t say *that* , nancy.” he sighed and broke eye contact with her, glancing off to the side.

“what are you talking about?” her stomach was in turmoil. she was trying so badly to help, so badly to reconnect with this boy, this ex. steve wasn’t someone she could keep as a prefix. he could never stay as just an *ex* . he was something, an aftertaste that never lingered with jonathan.

“i care about you a lot, okay? you’re a brilliant girl. i can’t listen to you lie to me about how you feel again. i can’t, alright? it’s not like you’ve started talking to me again. we’re the same as we were. nothing’s changed, better or worse.” steve took her hand off his shoulder and held it. “it just hurts like a mother—”

“steve, i…”

“don’t *steve* me. i still love you a little bit, and i don’t know in what way. unless you’re about to do something dramatic, please just let me let it die.” he let go of her hand and sat down on the pallet, fixing the blankets again. “goodnight, nancy.” he didn’t even look back up.

nancy felt so utterly confused, but she knew one thing for sure: *she wasn’t one hundred percent okay with letting these feelings die, because if what she’d been feeling those past few minutes and the way she’d been missing him was any indication, there was still something there.* she turned back to her bed and off her lamp. she didn’t say goodnight

back as she crawled into her bed. the night light she'd been sleeping with ever since she'd crawled into the upside down lit up the room just enough. she head steve rustle in surprise, but nancy knew that he wouldn't judge.

she could still see his silhouette sitting up, and she was too. neither was looking at each other, just creating more tension. both of them knew they could cut it with a knife. nancy felt filled with emotion, and it was nearing the brim. at any moment she felt as if she may spill over, causing an unexpected outcome.

the spill happened, and the outcome was something that she wouldn't have predicted merely hours beforehand. she got up, and before nancy could think twice, she got down on her knees in front of steve and cut off his, "what?" with a deep, passionate kiss. it felt as if they were starving, as if they'd been waiting their entire lives for the reunion. he began to kiss back, intertwining his fingers into her hair and resting the other on the back of her neck.

steve was the one to break it. "oh, my god. nancy, what was that?" he stared at her face intensely, half of it lit up by the warm glow of the night light and the other half covered in shadows.

" *unless* ," nancy responded, and they both knew what it meant. *unless you're about to do something dramatic.* "i can't let you go, steve. it's selfish but i can't let you go for some goddamn reason."

"nance…" the way steve said it was filled with love, with emotion, with the tone of a man who'd been heartbroken before and was about to open himself up for the first time since. he leaned in again, hand on her cheek, and kissed her once more, softer and yet even more intimate than the first. "i don't know what to say." nancy

could see the swirl of feelings and the wheels turning right in his eyes.

“neither do i, anymore.” she shook her head.

with the understanding of two people who’d fit together so perfectly once before, they laid down onto the floor with a silent, mutual understanding for the night. steve’s arm rested around her, pulling her into him. he’d missed her too. she almost felt like crying as she fell asleep in his arms and he passed out wrapped around her.